



# Nature-Based Preschool Program

- Small class size within a culture of joyful learning
- At least two hours of outside time each day
- Natural learning materials and an emphasis on imaginative play
- Spanish, Physical & Stewardship Education, Art, and Music each week



The preschool class is a joyful place for the children to grow in an atmosphere of love and acceptance. Quakers believe that each person has a divine seed, or Inner Light. For that reason, Quaker education is a process where both student and teacher are learning together. All children bring their unique way of learning into the world, to be nurtured and celebrated.

The three- and four-year-olds are masters of imitation. Children carefully observe other humans, especially adults, to learn how to behave. For this reason, teachers endeavor always to model the highest level of integrity, wonder, service, enthusiasm, and respect. These children are natural learners with a built-in urge for exploration and experimentation. The two hours of free play, one inside and one outside, provide time for the rich interaction with the environment that the growing brain needs in order to create meaningful learning. Teachers observe the children's play and provide resources and join in the enthusiasm so that groups and individuals are able to follow their own learning journeys. Curiosity and questions are encouraged from everybody, and the search for answers is a mutual adventure.

The preschool class is often a child's first experience with being in a group other than the family. While we recognize that each child is unique we also emphasize the joy of creating a community by helping children see ways that each contributes to the whole. We have communal snacks each day, provided by families in turn. We encourage each other to show appreciation, helpfulness, cooperation, and flexibility.



Natural materials and simple, lovely surroundings create a safe, comfortable and aesthetically pleasing environment for learning. If children's brains are to be ready for abstract reading and math tasks, they must first have plenty of chances to develop their imagination and problem solving skills through play. For children of this age, play is the way that they learn. Significant learning experiences outside are directly correlated to greater interest in all learning, and in improved performance in all academic areas.

Visible to the teachers, but seamlessly woven into the children's experience, are activities and conversations that extend learning in language and literacy, mathematical thinking, scientific and social inquiry, art, music, and physical development. Teachers carefully observe and plan, leaving ample room for spontaneity. Preschool students attend music, art, and physical education classes.

We offer a 2-, 3- or 5-day program with either half days (until noon) or full days (until 3pm). Optional aftercare is available until 5:30pm.

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